IN THE CLAIMS

1. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** A computer-implemented audio advertising method for providing audio advertisements to users of telephony services, comprising the steps of:

receiving bid data from advertisement providers over a network, wherein an audio advertisement is played over the network if the bid data is determined satisfactory;

receiving asking data over the network to determine whether the bid data is satisfactory;

determining whether the bid data is satisfactory based upon a comparison between the bid data and the asking data; and

storing an audio advertisement after the bid data has been determined satisfactory, wherein the stored audio advertisement is played over the network to the users of the telephony services;

wherein a user uses a telephony server to access a service that is located on the network;

providing the service and the stored audio advertisement to the user;

wherein the service is a voice markup language application located on the Internet.

2. **(ORIGINAL)** The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

determining that the bid data is unsatisfactory based upon the comparison;

receiving second bid data from the advertisement providers over the

network;

determining whether the second bid data is satisfactory based upon a

comparison between the second bid data and the asking data; and

storing the audio advertisement after the second bid data has been

determined satisfactory, wherein the stored audio advertisement is played over the

network to the users of the telephony services.

3. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 1 wherein the bid data includes a financial

arrangement regarding payment for playing the audio advertisement.

4. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 3 wherein the financial arrangement includes

a revenue-sharing financial arrangement.

5. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

storing a plurality of audio advertisements in a database;

receiving a request to retrieve at least one of the stored audio

advertisements;

retrieving at least one of the stored audio advertisements based upon

predetermined selection rules,

wherein the retrieved audio advertisement is played over the network to

the users of the telephony services.

6. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 5 wherein the request includes a user profile, said method further comprising the step of:

retrieving at least one of the stored audio advertisements that substantially matches the user profile provided in the request.

7. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 5 wherein the selection rules include balanced ad usage rules that are used to determine which stored audio advertisement to retrieve.

8. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 5 wherein the selection rules include profit rules that are used to determine which stored audio advertisement to retrieve.

9. **CANCELLED.**

10. **CANCELLED.**

11. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 9 wherein the stored audio advertisement is an audio file containing an advertisement.

12. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 9 wherein the stored audio advertisement is a location identifier to locate an audio file on the network.

13. **(ORIGINAL)**   The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

receiving ad usage data about the playing of the stored audio advertisement to the users; and

providing the ad usage data to the advertisement providers, wherein the advertisement providers formulate bid data based upon the ad usage data.

14. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)**   A computer-implemented audio advertising system that provides audio advertisements to users of telephony services over a network, comprising:

a database that stores audio advertising data;

an advertising retrieval server with a data connection to the database, wherein the advertising retrieval server retrieves audio advertising data based upon predetermined selection rules; and

a network port with a connection to the advertising retrieval server and to the network, wherein the network port provides a data communication pathway so that an advertisement may be played over the network to the users of the telephony services based upon the retrieved audio advertising data;

wherein a telephony server is used to access a service that is located on the network, wherein the advertising retrieval server provides the service and the advertisement to the user;

wherein the service is a voice markup language application located on the Internet.

15. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 14 wherein the audio advertising data is an audio file containing the advertisement.

16. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 14 wherein the audio advertising data includes a location identifier to locate an audio file on the network.

17. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 16 wherein the network is an Internet network.

18. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 17 wherein the location identifier is a Uniform Resource Location (URL) that identifies on a remote computer on the Internet network an audio file containing the advertisement to be played.

19. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 14 wherein a request is provided to the advertising retrieval server to provide the advertisement to the users of the telephony services.

20. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 19 wherein the request includes a user profile, wherein the advertising retrieval server retrieves stored audio advertising data from the database that substantially matches the user profile provided in the request.

21. **(ORIGINAL)** The audio advertising system of claim 19 wherein the selection rules include balanced ad usage rules that are used to determine which stored audio advertising data to retrieve.

22. **(ORIGINAL)** The audio advertising system of claim 19 wherein the selection rules include profit rules that are used to determine which stored audio advertising data to retrieve.

23. **(ORIGINAL)** The audio advertising system of claim 14 further comprising:

an advertising management server that includes a network port in data communication with the network, wherein the advertising management server receives bid data from advertisement providers over the network, wherein the audio advertisement is played over the network if the bid data is determined satisfactory.

24. **(ORIGINAL)** The audio advertising system of claim 23 wherein the advertising management server receives asking data over the network to determine whether the bid data is satisfactory.

25. **(ORIGINAL)** The audio advertising system of claim 24 wherein the bid data is satisfactory based upon a comparison between the bid data and the asking data.

26. **(ORIGINAL)** The audio advertising system of claim 24 wherein ad usage data is collected about the playing of the advertisement to the users, wherein the asking data is formulated based upon the ad usage data.

27. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 24 wherein the advertising management server and the advertising retrieval server operate upon the same computer.

28. **(ORIGINAL)**   The audio advertising system of claim 24 wherein the advertising management server and the advertising retrieval server operate upon different computers.

29. **CANCELLED**.

30. **CANCELLED**.